

SEP 23 1999

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September 22, 1999



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Mr. Rick Breitenbach
CalFed Bay-Delta Program
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155
Sacramento, CA 95814

• *Comments on CALFED Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement / Environmental Impact Report*

Dear Mr. Breitenbach:

These are the comments of Recreational Boaters of California in regard to the Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement / Environmental Impact Report.

RBOC is the nonprofit organization that works on behalf of 40,000 boating families to protect and enhance the interests of recreational boating as they would be impacted by state legislation and regulations.

As a statewide organization, we recognize the importance of the CALFED program in the development of long-term solutions to the water needs of California and the protection of the valuable Delta environment and resources.

At the same time, the recreational boating community has several serious concerns with the draft programmatic EIS/EIR for the CalFed Bay-Delta Program. Enclosed with this letter, for the record, are letters from 242 individual boaters who are troubled by the negative impacts that the program would have on boating.

To date, the effort being conducted by 15 state and federal agencies has not sufficiently considered the impacts that the programs would have on recreational boaters in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and the San Francisco Bay.

We request that recreational boaters be included as stakeholders, and that the program include measures that mitigate the negative impacts on boating.

Boaters cannot embrace the proposed preferred program alternative until a number of critical issues are addressed, the impacts are assessed, and the mitigations are decided upon, for:

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- Navigation in the Delta and Bay, including restrictions on speed and channel barriers.
- Water currents, flows, and speed.
- Boating-related facilities, including pumpout stations and gray water disposal.
- Businesses that rely on boaters as customers.
- Water depths in areas utilized by boaters.
- Accessibility of Delta waterways to boaters.
- Availability of drinking water, food and other supplies for boaters.
- Signage providing boaters with directions to recreational facilities and related information.
- Activities to enhance the existing boating opportunities in the Delta and Bay, and to expand these opportunities as populations and users increase, including facilities, destination points, marinas, and others.

In addition, a percentage of funds for the CALFED program should be set aside for the preparation and implementation of a master plan for recreational boating that is developed by representatives of recreational boating stakeholders. Projects financed with CALFED funds should designate a percentage of funds to be used to provide access, recreation and services for recreational boating.

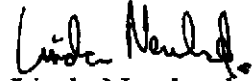
It is also important that the CALFED process recognize and incorporate the findings of the Department of Boating and Waterways studies regarding levee erosion, vessel traffic, and boating needs assessment to determine prime aquatic recreational boating areas to be protected and enhanced.

We are very concerned that the draft programmatic EIS/EIR fails to adequately address these critical issues. As boaters, we cannot support the proposed preferred program alternative unless there are mitigations that ensure that the ability of recreational boaters to enjoy the Delta are augmented.

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Thank you for the opportunity to provide the comments of the recreational boating community. If you have any questions, please contact me at 510-521-7172, or Jerry Desmond, Jr., Director of Government Relations, at 916-441-4166.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Linda Newland".

Linda Newland,
President

rboc\calfed-testimony